

Ayako Takase, IDSA // designer + educator // 401-497-4818 // ayakotaka@gmail.com

ACADEMIC
POSITIONS &
PROFESSIONAL
PRACTICE

RHODE ISLAND SCHOOL OF DESIGN // Providence, RI

2017-current // associate professor in Industrial Design

Assistant professor (2017-2021) & Associate professor (2021-current) in the Industrial Design Department with a focus in hands-on learning. Teaching wide range of courses in both undergraduate and graduate programs including Junior Special Topics Studio (Prototyping Form), Senior Advanced Studios (Furniture for Production, Industry sponsored glassware design, Material experimental in cork, Design research & exploration: How Do We Work?), Graduate II, Graduate Thesis Studio II, and Wood II.

2020-2025 // graduate program director in Industrial Design

Graduate program director of the industrial Design Department in charge of developing and fostering MID program, students, and faculty. Responsible in all aspects of graduate experience including admissions, scholarship, fellowship and assistantship assignments, facility, budget, curriculum development and student advising & mentoring.

2017-2019 // faculty coordinator in Industrial Design

Faculty coordinator in the Industrial Design Department to assist the head of the department in various administrative tasks. Responsibilities include supervising independent/collaborative study, internship, and ID culture building such as lecture, exhibitions and student events.

OBSERVATORY // Providence, RI

2001-current // co-founder & principle

Co-founder and principal of an award winning multidisciplinary design consultancy with a focus on industrial and furniture design. Clients range widely from global corporations to small start-ups, including, Herman Miller, Proctor & Gamble, Gillette, Google, Keilhauer, Samsonite, Liberty Science Center, and Tradeworks of Japan.

ADDITIONAL
EXPERIENCES

Dykes and Trans People of Color March (DTPOC PVD) // Providence, RI

2019-2024 // co-organizer, activist, designer

Co-organizer of the first annual Dyke and Trans People of Color March in Providence focusing on supporting and lifting under-represented community members of color during Pride week.

Wangari Maathai Community School // Providence, RI

2018-2020 // board of trustee

Board of trustee of a new K-8 public charter school aiming to open in Providence. Utilizing Providence, with its rich natural, cultural, historical, and creative resources, the school intended to offer hands on and project-base teaching fostering diversity, interdependence, explorations, and responsibility in students and community.

Montessori Community School of RI // Providence, RI

2017-2018 // board member

Board member of the Montessori School based in Providence. School's mission includes cultivating community centric and socio-economic diversity. Currently serving as a treasurer.

Rhode Island School of Design // Providence, RI

2010-16 // adjunct faculty in Industrial Design

A critic for a wide range of studios taught for Industrial Design department at RISD as well as serving as an advisor to various ISP/CSP and Graduate Thesis projects

Birsel + Seck (formally Olive 1:1) // New York, NY

1999-2001 // lead industrial designer

Lead Industrial Designer of an internationally renowned design firm lead by Ayse Birsel. Clients and projects include Resolve Office System for Herman Miller, Herman Miller Red, Oscar Sink for Merati, Italy, and Tulip Bathroom-ware for Decorum, Turkey.

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EDUCATION

Rhode Island School of Design // Providence, RI
1999 // BFA in Industrial Design

CONFERENCE TALKS & AWARD JURY

Core77 Design Award in Furniture & Lighting
award juror // 2024

IDSA (Industrial Designers Society of America) Academic Symposium
Co-Creating Matriarchal Design Futures / co-presenter & workshop facilitator with Heather S. Quinn // New York, NY / September 2023

Vilcek Foundation Prizes for Creative Promise in Design
grant juror // 2023

HASTAC (Humanities, Arts, Science and Technology Alliance and Collaboratory) Conference
Feminist Pedagogy as Liberatory Practice / panelist // Brooklyn, New York / June 2023

Frauhaus: Women of Industrial Design presents “Design Intersection”
Urgent Call for Intersectionality in Design / event speaker // Wentworth School of Architecture
Boston, MA / November 2022

L A M P: International Lighting Design Competition
competition judge // 2022

The IDSA International Design Conference (IDC) & Education Symposium
Urgent Call for Intersectionality in Design / invited main stage speaker // Seattle, WA /
September 2022

Attending [To] Futures Conference,
Matriarchal Design Futures: Collective Work In Progress / co-presenter & workshop facilitator
with Heather S. Quinn // TH Köln / Cologne, Germany / November 2021

AICAD (Association of Independent Colleges of Art and Design) Symposium 2020
What Does a Matriarchal, Anti-Exceptional Design Futures Look Like? / co-presenter &
workshop facilitator with Heather S. Quinn // February 2021

Design Incubation Affiliated Society Meeting | Connecting Scholars, Building Community,
Design Research Network(ing) with CAA (College Art Association)
forum panelist // February 2021

IDEA (Industrial Design Excellence Award)
award juror // IDSA (Industrial Designers Society of America) / appointed 2020-2021

Discovering the Japanese Modern
the panelist and the lecturer // The Noguchi Museum / New York, NY / 2008

SELECT GUEST LECTURES @ SCHOOLS

Business of Commercial Design
Parsons at the New School // Professional Practice Studio / 2023-25

Designing for Manufacturing
Rochester Institute of Technology // Experimental Studio / 2024

Founding of Observatory & Herman Miller Case Study
MIT & RISD // Product Design & Development Studio / 2023

Prototyping as Research
Washington University // UX Research Methods in Design / 2023

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Industrial Design Professional Practice

DePaul University, School of Design // Capstone Studio / 2021

Design Consulting as Business

Brown University // The Entrepreneur Process / 2019-2020

Industrial Design Professional Practice

Parsons at the New School // Design Studio 4 / 2019

EXHIBITIONS
CHAPTERS
ARTICLES
& PUBLICATIONS

Matriarchal Design Futures: A Collective Work in Progress by Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. / *Design as Activism at The Institute of Design at Illinois Tech*, edited by Jessica Meharry, pages 30-33 // ORO Editions / Conference proceedings / published June 2025

M(other)ing / *Matriarchal Design Futures*. Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. // Duke Hall Gallery at James Madison University, Harrisonburg, VA / exhibited October 2025

M(other)ing / *Matriarchal Design Futures*. Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. // Perspective Galleries at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg, VA / exhibited March, 2025

Past and Present Strategies to Advance the Rights of Women / *Matriarchal Design Futures: Bookstand 2125* by Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. / Chicago Women's History Annual Conference// Roosevelt University, Chicago, IL / exhibited March 2025

Ulisés: Assembly / *Matriarchal Design Futures* by S co-authored nyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. // Tufts University Art Galleries, Boston, MA / exhibited August 13–November 10, 2024

Typeforce 13 / *Bookstand 2125: Matriarchal Design Futures* by Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. // Co-Prosperity Sphere, Chicago, IL / exhibited January 2025.

A Decade of Design in RI / *Lúme* by Observatory / DESIGNxRI // Providence, RI / exhibited September 2023

Matriarchal Design Futures: A Collective Work in Progress co-authored by Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. Risograph 2nd ed. 200 // Binch Press / Providence, RI / published 2024 // *Acquired by Rhode Island School Of Design Library. Selected for distribution by: Draw Down Books—exclusive graphic design publisher (4th acquisition), Ulises Artists Books, and Antenne Books/London (for distribution across Europe—stock lists include the Tate, Photographer's Gallery, Artwords, ICA, and Donlon books)*

Matriarchal Design Futures: A Collective Work in Progress, co-authored by Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. Risograph 1st ed. 200. // Binch Press / Providence, RI / 2023

Matriarchal Design Futures: A Collective Work in Progress co-authored by Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. / *Attending [To] Futures, Matters of Politics in Design Education, Research, Practice*, edited by Johanna Mehl, pages 231-241 // ADOCS Publishers / Hamburg, Germany / a book chapter / published October 2023

On Matriarchal Education, co-authored by Snyder-Quinn, H., Takase, A. / *Feminist Designer*, edited by Alison Place, pages 140-144 // MIT Press / Cambridge, MA / September 2023

Faculty Exhibition & Forum /OK Bucket and Zokin Rags by Observatory // Rhode Island School of Design / Providence, RI / exhibited November 2021

Wobbly World by Cas Holman & Observatory // Liberty Science Center / Jersey City, NJ / a permanent interactive exhibition / opened December 2021

Industrial Design Department Triennial Exhibition / *OK Bucket and Zokin Rags* by Observatory // Rhode Island School of Design // Providence, RI / 2019

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EXHIBITIONS
CHAPTERS
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& PUBLICATIONS
(cont.)

Herman Miller presents—Furnishing Utopia 4.0 Drawing Upon Frameworks / *Tessellated Dome* by Observatory // Herman Miller Showroom / New York, NY / 2019

Airia Desk by Observatory for Herman Miller / *Herman Miller - Way of Living*, edited by A. Auscherman, S. Grawe, and L. Ransmeier / Phaidon // New York, NY / 2019

DWR presents—Furnishing Utopia 3.0 Hands to Work / *OK Bucket & Zokin Rags* by Observatory // DWR SOHO / New York, NY / 2018

Faculty Exhibition & Forum / *Ubi Work Tools* for Herman Miller & *Doko* for Keilhauer by Observatory // Rhode Island School of Design / Providence, RI / 2018

Dialogue Layered Glass Doors by Observatory for ODL // International Builders' Show / Orange County Convention Center / Orlando, FL / 2018

Doko by Observatory for Keilhauer // Healthcare Design Expo / George R. Brown Convention Center / Houston, TX / 2016

Doko by Observatory or Keilhauer // NeoCon / the Merchandise Mart / Chicago, IL / 2016

Layout Studio & Ubi Work Tools by Observatory for Herman Miller // NeoCon / the Merchandise Mart / Chicago, IL / 2016

Cleo Marker Boards for Skyline Design // NeoCon / the Merchandise Mart / Chicago, IL / 2012

Ekke & Avva Votive Stacker for Teroforma // NY NOW / New York, NY / 2011

Blink Mirror Collection for Skyline Design // ICFF (International Contemporary Furniture Fair) / Javit Center / New York, NY / 2011

Airia Desk and Credenza for Herman Miller // ICFF (International Contemporary Furniture Fair) / Javit Center / New York, NY / 2008

AWARDS
RECOGNITION
& GRANTS

RISD Professional Development Fund // *Plastic Waste Reuse Project* / 2025

STA 100 (Society of Typographic Arts) Winner // *Matriarchal Design Futures Workbook* / 2023

RISD Professional Development Fund // Design & Build of the *Lúme Cabinet* / 2020

Ex-Future Lab Visiting Design Collaborator // DePaul University Ex-Future Lab / 2019

The Global Engagement for Curricular Development Grant Recipient // RISD / 2019

Short listed for Dezeen Awards Homeware Design category // *Furnishing Utopia, OK Bucket and Zokin Rags* / 2018

New Faculty Grant Recipient // RISD / 2017

Best of Year Award, Interior Design Magazine // *Doko* for Keilhauer / 2016

GOOD DESIGN Award, Chicago Athenaeum // *Doko* for Keilhauer / 2016

HiP Award, Interior Design Magazine // *Doko* for Keilhauer / 2016

Global Innovation Award, Housewares Association // *Troika Trivet* for Teroforma / 2013

Good Design Award, Japan Institute for Design Promotion // *Lapel Pen* for Tradeworks / 2011

Good Design Award, Japan Institute for Design Promotion // *Stick Pen* for Tradeworks / 2011

GOOD DESIGN Award, Chicago Athenaeum // *Airia Desk & Credenza* for Herman Miller / 2008

International Contemporary Furniture Fair, Editors' Award for Body of Work // Lifework Portfolio, *Airia Desk and Credenza* for Herman Miller / 2008

I.D. Magazine Design Award // *Oscar Sink* for Merati, Italy with Ayse Birsel / 2000

SELECTED PRESS

Women who make DWR // NYTimes Style Magazine + Design Within Reach / Oct 2019
Airia Desk for Herman Miller // Herman Miller Way of Living / May 2019
Minimalist, Shaker-Inspired Cleaning Tools That'll Make You Want To Do Chores // Sight Unseen / May 2018
Shaker-style tools for household chores feature in Furnishing Utopia's Hands to Work exhibition // Dezeen / May 2018
America's design community comes into its own // Fast Company / May 2018
10 Must-See Debuts at NYCxDesign 2018 // Azure Magazine / May 2018
Furnishing Utopia 3.0 // NYTimes, Wallpaper, Interior Design, Design Milk, Metropolis / May 2018
RISD ID department class/pedagogy feature // Forbes JAPAN / May 2017
Doko for Keilhauer // Canadian Interiors / July 2016
Doko for Keilhauer // Interior Design / June 2016
Doko for Keilhauer // Contract Magazine / June 2016
Doko for Keilhauer // Metropolis / May 2016
Airia Desk & Credenza for Herman Miller // The New York Times / September 2009
Airia Desk & Credenza for Herman Miller // Pasajes Diseno / October 2008
Airia Desk & Credenza for Herman Miller // Wallpaper / October 2008
Airia Desk & Credenza for Herman Miller // Vogue Living Australia / October 2008
Airia Desk & Credenza for Herman Miller // Men's Journal / September 2008
Airia Desk & Credenza for Herman Miller // Metropolis / June 2008
Kotatsu Work Table for Herman Miller // Wallpaper / November 2005
Kotatsu Work Table for Herman Miller // Metropolitan Home / September 2004
Kotatsu Work Table for Herman Miller // Metropolis / July 2004
Kotatsu Work Table for Herman Miller // Interior Design / June 2004

INTELLECTUAL
PROPERTY

US Utility Patent 0140935A1 // desk with user selectable adjustment for hot desking / for Google / 2023
US Utility Patent 11655669B2 // lighted door Jamb for an access door / for ODL / 2023
US Utility Patent 10808438B2, 11542733B2, 11952814B2, 12326022B2 // door assembly for selectively interlocking opposing doors/ for Larson / 2023
US Design Patent 845575 // bag caddy / for Herman Miller / 2017
US Design Patent 832260 // usb hub / for Herman Miller / 2016
US Utility Patent 9925679 // food slicer / 2016
US Design Patent 739604 // razor handle / for Gillette Company / 2013
US Design Patent 601893 // cosmetic bottle cap / for Gillette & Proctor and Gamble / 2009
US Design Patent 600104 // office chair caster / for Herman Miller / 2009
US Design Patent 578003 // cosmetic bottle and cap / for Gillette & Proctor and Gamble / 2008
US Design Patent 578005 // cosmetic bottle and cap / for Gillette & Proctor and Gamble / 2008
US Design Patent 602356 // cosmetic bottle cap for / for Gillette & Proctor and Gamble / 2008
US Design Patent 542675 // razor case / for Gillette Company / 2006
US Design Patent 540685 // container for personal care product/ for Gillette Company / 2005
US Design Patent 530623, 515938, 517426 // cosmetic dispenser/ for Gillette Company / 2005
US Utility Patent 6662732 // desk top frame / for Herman Miller / 2003
US Design Patent 450959 // desk top frame / for Herman Miller / 2000

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ONLINE REFERENCE

OBSERVATORY // observatorydesign.com

Matriarchal Design Futures // matriarchalfutures.design

Herman Miller designer profile // hermanmiller.com/designers/observatory.html

Design Within Reach designer profile // dwr.com/designer-ayako-takase-and-cutter-hutton?lang=en_US

Keilhauer designer profile // keilhauer.com/designers

Forbes Japan article // forbesjapan.com/articles/detail/16355

SOCIAL MEDIA

instagram/@provprofessor // RISD ID snapshots, design stories, & professional work

instagram/@observatorydesign // OBSERVATORY studio

instagram/@matriarchaldesignfutures // Matriarchal Design Futures work

instagram/@bookstand2125 // Bookstand 2125 Project Archive